

Trick or fairly traded treat

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

October 29, 2010



I've always been ambivalent about Halloween. When I was little, my sisters and I dressed up and went trick-or-treating, but we weren't allowed to wear scary costumes. (Or rather, nothing *supernatural* and scary--my sister's Raggedy Ann getup [left] screams "scary clown.")

Later my parents rejected trick-or-treating entirely, sending us instead to an alternate "harvest party" at church each year. We wore creative Bible costumes: I as the rock Moses struck for water (in a black garbage bag with a hole for a squirt gun), my sister as the salt of the earth (in a rock salt bag), my sister and I as Martha and Lazarus (I wrapped in rags, she periodically delivering the King Jamesian punchline, "He stinketh!").

Later still, we avoided the trick-or-treaters by leaving the house for the afternoon or hiding in the basement with a movie.

Nowadays, I've no serious objection to Halloween (or [candy](#)), and I appreciate CCblogger Alan Rudnick's [case](#) for Christians observing the holiday. But I also have no nostalgia for it--I was only briefly allowed to celebrate Halloween, and I probably spent most of the time whining about not being allowed to dress up as a ghost. Most years I forget about it until some poor kid rings the doorbell and the only edibles in

the apartment are beans, peanut butter and beer.

This idea, however, has me excited: [reverse trick-or-treating](#). The event, run by Global Exchange, is in its fourth year. Instead of demanding chocolate (under vague threat of trick), kids go door to door *handing out* fair-trade chocolate with information about the fair-trade movement. Sure, some people might respond with a "these insufferable do-gooders" roll of the eyes, but the fact that *cute children are trying to give them high-quality chocolate* ought to mitigate most of this. And the [blood chocolate](#) trade is a serious problem.

Once my wife and I have kids, maybe we'll try this. I should start brainstorming scrappy, homemade Bible costumes with chocolate-distributing themes.